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NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2024



Fighting predators on the Auckland Islands.



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COMMUNITY FORUM

Date and Time: Wednesday, October 16th. Doors open at 9:30 am

Venue: Bridge Club Rms, Neil Hunt Park, Tarawera Rd, Lynmore

Welcome to our Spring get-together.

Enjoy tea, coffee and munchies (no charge!)

*We will be joined by members of **Forest and Bird** who are coming to hear our guest speaker.*

Want to know more? Call 027 310 8348

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Guest Speaker:



Macquarie Island 2013

Stephen Horn

Manager- National Eradication Team
National Programmes
Department of Conservation
Murihiku/Invercargill Office (the deep South)

New Zealand

shorn@doc.govt.nz

DOC's National Eradication Team (NET) provide strategic, technical and delivery support for achieving pest eradication goals on islands. A substantial component of the work is developing better tools to detect, eradicate and prevent animal pests from establishing on predator-free islands.



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Between 2017 and 2020, Stephen managed the **Maukahuka*** Pest-Free **Auckland Island** team. The team carried out a three-year feasibility study including large-scale trials of methods to eradicate pigs, mice and cats from Auckland Island. It is the only island in the World Heritage listed NZ Subantarctic where animal pests remain. The team's work included large-scale field trials of proposed methods for each species.

See published research from that period here: [N.Z.J.Ecol., Volume 46\(3\), 2022 | NZES \(newzealandecology.org\)](#)

The project was temporarily put on hold due to COVID in 2020 but work has continued in testing and developing the tools required for a future eradication attempt. Fundraising is the largest remaining barrier before commencement.

Stephen is a member of DOC's Island Eradication Advisory Group (IEAG) supporting pest-eradication projects in New Zealand and abroad.

Other island eradication roles include hunting team leader and dog handler for the rabbit eradication on Australia's Macquarie Island between 2012 -2014. He also led the project to eradicate mice from Antipodes Island in 2016 (Million Dollar Mouse).

Starting with DOC in 2008, he worked on Resolution Island and Secretary Island stoat eradication after six years working as a wine maker in New Zealand and Europe.

Stephen lives on a small farm, just outside of Invercargill with his partner Karen, 1 year old daughter Kiah, rodent detection dog Mica and rabbit chaser Tio.

For a good idea of the conditions Stephen was working in, here is a link to a Maukahuka short promo video [Maukahuka Project Teaser \(vimeo.com\)](https://vimeo.com)



.Stephen on East Windward Island looking towards Antipodes Island 2016



Thanks to *Joan Nicol* for providing hospitality for Stephen.



.The challenging environment of Auckland Island.





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YOUR COMMITTEE

BRIAN GILLESPIE: <i>PRESIDENT & NEWSLETTER EDITOR</i>	027 310 8348
MELVYN BOWEN: <i>VICE-PRESIDENT & ALMONER</i>	07 345 3221
LIZ LOVE: <i>SECRETARY</i>	07 332 5608
PAUL GELLATLY: <i>TREASURER & MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY</i>	027 4987 124
JIM HARTWIG	021 027 47976
JILL NICHOLAS	027 424 3091
JOHN TURNER	07 345 6955
JUDY SOMERVILLE	07 357 2292
JULIA STEELE	021 155 6776

Committee Notes:

- ♥ We welcome [Judy Somerville](#) and [Julia Steele](#) to the Committee. [Judy](#) was on the Committee in the early days of U3A, Rotorua. [Julia](#) is profiled in this edition.
- ♥ An enterprising sub-committee is drafting a guide for members who wish to form a new activity group.
- ♥ Interesting fact: U3A Rotorua is not connected to a national body. Each area's U3A group is autonomous.



***Your Committee at the Positive Ageing Expo U3A stand,
Saturday 21 September.***

*Left to right: Julia Steele, Paul Gellatly, Brian Gillespie
(seated), Liz Love, John Turner, Jill Nicholas.*

Absent: Mel Bowen, Jim Hartwig, Judy Somerville



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Each newsletter, we will profile a committee member.

Woman of Steel(e)

Julia Steele is the youngest member of our U3A Committee. She joined U3A Rotorua post-Covid. Julia is retired which for some people means changing one set of responsibilities for another. Julia is community-oriented.

With a background in Education: teaching practice and administration (notably with TAFE in Australia), Julia is well-equipped to deal with Rotorua U3A issues. This doesn't mean to say that U3A members are like small children.

The Steeles (Julia and Philip) came to Rotorua in 2009. Julia was born in Papakura, growing up between Papakura and Drury. She is a product of Rosehill College (as was Keiran Reid). Thence to North Shore Teachers College and teaching in Wairoa.

Her then husband ran a top-dressing concern and they settled in Otorohanga. The winds of change took the essence out of topdressing with the Lange Govt reducing subsidies in 1987.

So it was off to Australia. Julia taught at Moree, NSW, in Toowoomba and on the Sunshine Coast. And there was the administration with TAFE

It was back to NZ in 2004 and Te Awamutu was the next port of call. Julia did admin for a veterinary concern and involved herself with the *Keep Te Awamutu Beautiful* Committee.



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With Rotorua U3A, Julia belongs to the History Group, the Science and Engineering Group, the Books Group, and is on the U3A Committee. She serves on The ParkSyde Board of Trustees.

A busy person with a multiplicity of previous addresses, Julia has applied herself to various skill-intensive pursuits over a long, productive time. We are fortunate to have her



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Congratulations to U3A member, **Eileen Shapley**, who celebrated her 100th birthday recently.



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Secretary Liz's Encounter of the Third Age kind

U3A is international – is it ubiquitous? Do you have a story?

It was the final breakfast of a recent cruise from Darwin to Broome and my husband and I were joined at our table by an Australian couple. Because his wife was unwell the night before and declined dinner he, until then a stranger, had asked to join our table and engaged in a number of topics which he reported back to his wife so that she wanted to meet us before we disembarked the following morning. I had observed her during the cruise and not been particularly drawn to her but it was easy to be polite and we started with general chatter.

“Have you heard about U3A” she asked me?

“Well yes, I’m actually secretary of our local branch, and I’m missing our AGM today”

“So am I ! and ours is coming up” she said, and so began a conversation which had us almost the last table to have to leave the dining room.

Being U3A members gave us things to talk about and has inspired me since to look at their Queensland website. They offer a wide range of activities and courses, including Aqua aerobics, Armchair travel, Decoupage, Scrabble, Scrapbooking and Stockmarket discussion to name a few we don’t have. She said that Mah Jong is very popular. Searching other U3A sites is interesting, even inspiring for ideas to start a new group, but conversation creates friendships and meeting someone from U3A is a great starting point.

Have you met someone where being a U3A member has opened a conversation or relationship?

Liz Love

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A little information about our Forum guests: Rotorua Branch: Forest & Bird

The Rotorua Branch of F&B has a number of ongoing projects and also arranges conservation/sustainability based talks and day walks during the year. Non F&B members are welcome to join all these activities.

Volunteers to assist with the Tikitapu and Linton Park projects would be very welcome.

Projects



Tikitapu Forest & Bird Care Group

Tikitapu Scenic Reserve is a 150ha native bush block located between Tikitapu/Blue Lake and Lake Okareka. It is part of the conservation estate and contains two public walking tracks. Our branch cares for it in partnership with DOC, BOP Regional Council, LandCare Okareka and Rotorua Botanical Society. Work done includes monitoring rare mistletoe, birds and bats, track and bait line maintenance, pest control with a trap network and an annual toxin distribution, and planting of natives plants.

Violet Bonnington Scenic Reserve

Located on the edge of the city in Paradise Valley Rd, this 0.5ha reserve is owned by Rotorua F&B. The reserve provides access to the DOC tracks on Mt Ngongotahā. Planting days or working bees are held occasionally.

Linton Park West Project

This is an urban park enhancement project which commenced in March 2024. The main tasks are removal of pest plants and releasing of smothered existing native plants, and picking up litter. New plantings will be done when sites are ready. Working bees are on one Saturday morning each month.

Kiwi Conservation Club

KCC is the junior part of F&B and offers nature-based activities for primary- and intermediate-school aged children and their families. We aim to offer 4 events per year. Families are also invited to attend branch events that are child-friendly.

Contact: Branch Chairperson – Judy Gardner Ph. 0211093803



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ROTORUA U3A INTEREST GROUPS: Highlighting indicates that the group currently has vacancies (October, 2024.) For more information, visit our website: www.u3arotorua.com

Topic	Time	Contact
Art History	2 nd Monday 10.00am	Anne Hunt 3487680 anneanddonhunt@gmail.com
Book Reviews (1)	3 rd Mondays, 2.00pm	Jill Nicholas 027 4243091 jill.nicholas@gmail.com
Book Reviews (2)	4 th Mondays, 2.00pm	Jeanette Ogg 348 8501 mandj.ogg@gmail.com
Cities	1 st Wednesdays 1.00pm	Cate Frey 220853913 catefrey1@gmail.com
Cooking for One	Check with Annette Bogun.	Annette Bogun 345 8198
Current Events (1)	1 st Thursdays, 10.00am	Nan Miller 3455817
Current Events (2)	1 st Wednesdays, 10.00am	Annie Wells 027 459 5157
Current Events (3)	2 nd Tuesdays, 10.00am	Jim Hartwig 985 4146
Films	1 st Mondays, 12.30pm	Judy Somerville 357 2292
History	2 nd & 4 th Fridays, 10.00am	Bob Christensen 020 4069 0982
Philosophy	4 th Thursdays, 1.30pm	Peter Wood 345 5099 stpeterwood@gmail.com
Photography	2 nd Tuesdays, 2.00pm Outings on 4 th Tuesdays	Dell Gee 021 050 2440 or 345 6557
Poetry	2 nd Thursdays, 2.00pm	Margaret Lett 343 9223 margaretlett@gmail.com
Ratbags	Check with Peter Wood	Peter Wood 345 5099
Science and Engineering	2 nd & 4 th Mondays, 9.30am	Mel Bowen 345 3221 mel.bowen@xtra.co.nz
Singing – The “Grey Warblers”	Twice monthly – time and venue notified by e-mail	Hilary Calman Hilary.calman@gmail.com
Visits	1 st Fridays, 1.30pm	Judy Somerville 357 2292
Wednesday Art Group	Every Wednesday, 1.15-3.00 pm	Mel Bowen 345 3221 mel.bowen@xtra.co.nz
Writing for Families (1)	1 st Fridays, 9.30am	Anne Stewart 345 9369 bastewart@xtra.co.nz
Writing for Families (2)	3 rd Mondays 10 am	Gordon White 273458634 poppagordie@gmail.com